

Palazzo Parisani T. Claudio  
Rome

April 6

1861

My dear Tom

You'd be glad to have a Roman line  
from me altho it must be short as I am in  
the midst of business & the departure of Newton  
gives me opportunity —

I am now well "in my saddle" & the great  
variety of things rather please them now, for I  
am equal to any amount of business & have  
just had Tom's rooms with divers persons in  
them all with individual affairs going on  
so I went from room to room, whilst my  
Secretary & Advocate & my son Arthur were  
helping — Nothing as yet comes amiss except my  
coat drops & sword, for I do not know myself in  
it — The translating documents into English has  
been my hardest labour, particularly the Pope's  
allocution which I dare say you saw & thought  
of me — My appointment has caused very great  
envy for there is no end of people here who

were candidates - It has been said that, a great  
pleasure to meet dear old friends for friendships in  
Rome "we are a joy for ever" & I have been so warmly  
received that Rome seems to me dearer than  
ever as I rise very early there is plenty of time  
for every thing & soon I hope to begin my painting  
when most of the English disappear then I  
shall have a sinecure for 6 months, so up to  
this I have not done any thing but assume  
the duties of my new office & in this I am  
fortunate in having a most excellent Secretary  
who was with Mr Newton, a young ~~Roman~~ <sup>Roman</sup> who  
is just of age & writes Italian, French & English  
so that many of my letters I have only to sign

I have had my usual luck in a house  
I have room for all the Severis if by chance  
they should give me the happiness of a visit  
& indeed I hope that it may be something  
more than a visit in some way, for altho'  
as yet I don't venture to feel my power &  
resources, yet I see that in a short time  
that I shall have a capital standing  
But here all is uncertainty, no one can



even feels what is to transpire - the City is  
full of French Soldiers, every monastery is now  
a barracks & you see monks & soldiers, should  
bring each other, what a marvellous state of  
things, what an important moment, what  
a crisis, almost bursting with the future  
As yet I have not sought an audience with  
the Pope but now it must come off & I am  
preparing - Cardinal Antonetti received  
me most graciously & assured me how acceptable  
my appointment was to the whole government  
indeed I see here that every thing turns on  
old, old, associations, so in this I stand  
really well -

Just now I have had a most affecting  
meeting with the sister, only sister, of Keats  
we discovered each other this morning -  
For a long time we remained without being  
able to speak, then like a brother & sister  
who had parted in early life, meeting after  
40 years - how singular that we should meet  
in the very place where Keats died - his eldest  
daughter is married to a Spanish engineer now  
directing the Roman railways - & indeed her  
family is Spanish & husband is a distinguished  
Spanish amateur Poet & man of fortune -

Did you hear that I have the felicity to meet  
Keats's sister here? - In 4<sup>th</sup> years since I  
once got a glance of her <sup>(1816)</sup> She is married  
to a Spanish gentleman Don Llanos & has  
3 daughters & one son, all charming people  
remaining here for her son in law Mr. Brockman  
is the chief ~~engineer~~ of the Roman railways  
& is of vast use in P.O. enquiries I have to  
make - then my Roman friends help me much  
Many old friends are still turning up -  
Overbeck has been 51 years in Rome, Gibson  
43 - & health & longevity are decidedly  
characteristics of Rome. & You know I did  
not expect to become vain or proud at my  
elevation, & I was right for I still feel very  
humble altho' I am called Your Excellency  
& soon I think <sup>humility</sup> makes me think I may in  
some degree excel. - You know that Arthur  
is with me at present studying languages  
& mathematics & we get on well together  
but he is dreadfully fond of painting & doing  
such bad things - Rome is like a besieged  
city, all the monasteries are turned into  
barracks & the convents too with the Nuns  
partitioned off - nobody can say what is to come  
My appointment caused great envy & there are  
here many bitter opponents, but I keep out of  
their way & am affraid to do so - God bless you  
our dear Maria believe me ever your loving brother J.